

Virginia Wildlife

JULY 1975

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Virginia Wildlife

**Dedicated to the Conservation of
Virginia's Wildlife and Related Natural Resources
and to the Betterment of
Outdoor Recreation in Virginia**

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Observations, conclusions and opinions expressed in *Virginia Wildlife* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the members or staff of the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries.

COVER: Eastern meadowlark and vetch, by Ralph L. Conner, Richmond, Virginia.

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Damage Stamp Denounced

The Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries is not directly involved in the Damage Stamp program except to certify damage when requested. The following is a typical letter summarizing many of the complaints sportsmen have about the program. Almost every year more counties ask to be added to the list authorized to levy this special tax. Our purpose in printing this letter is not to agitate local governing bodies but to invite constructive suggestions from sportsmen, landowners, county officials, and others interested. We will devote as much space as we can to differing points of view in our next few issues.

"There has been some discussion in this area, lately, as to the handling of surplus big game damage stamp funds. Damage stamp surpluses, which are held in a special game fund, exist in most of the western counties that require big game stamps. [At the end of 1974 these funds totaled \$303,335.88 in the 15 counties actually selling stamps.]"

Bath County leads the list with a balance of \$77,132 followed by Botetourt with \$60,342, Highland \$42,039, Rockbridge \$22,824, Giles \$20,090, Craig \$16,164, Wythe \$14,922, Patrick \$13,502, Smyth \$13,296, Washington \$6,081, Bland \$5,708, Grayson \$5,487, Tazewell \$3,030, Wise \$1,893, and Floyd \$825 (figures as of March, 1975, with minor exceptions). Of the \$115,904 collected in 1974, \$16,156 was paid to 118 landowners. Other uses sanctioned for the funds earmarked for "conservation, restoration and protection of wildlife" range from clean-up following hunting season to purchase of two-way radios, fire engines, funding of a local school, shot-up mailboxes, sheep killed by dogs and a telephone system. (We might add that they are also used legitimately for stocking game, promoting wildlife food patches, hunter safety training, conservation scholarships for teachers, etc.) The counties of Albemarle, Alleghany, Amherst, Bath, Bedford, Bland, Botetourt, Carroll, Charles City, Clarke, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Frederick, Giles, Grayson, Highland, Isle of Wight, Loudoun, Madison, Nelson, New Kent, Page, Patrick, Rappahannock, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Roanoke, Russell, Scott, Shenandoah, Smyth, Southampton, Sussex, Tazewell, Warren, Washington, Wise and Wythe are authorized by law to require such a stamp at will.

"It is obvious that damage stamp funds are often being used for purposes that are far removed from those which the law originally intended. Statutes and penalties for vandalism, damage to private property, and free-running dogs have long been on the books. Certainly the equipping of state foresters and the financing of telephone systems do not relate, even distantly, to damage by big game or hunters. To use damage stamp funds for purposes other than those for which they were collected is not equitable to the hunter. The damage stamp is a tax placed only on hunters and should either be used for the original purpose or else done away with."

"In view of the amount of damages and their nature, it is indeed difficult to justify the existence of the damage stamp law. I feel the damage stamp law should be repealed. As it presently stands, the damage stamp is a tax that is placed only on hunters, fostered by local politicians under the guise of covering damages caused by big game. In essence, the collection of such funds is not justified by the damages committed and is perpetuated by use of such funds for purposes that only vaguely relate to big game. This constitutes nothing more than a swindle of the big game hunter and sportsman."—H. L. G.

Let's Analyze the Harvest

I would like to see an article in *Virginia Wildlife* on the breakdown of deer, bear and turkey kills with such information as average weight of deer, average number of points for bucks, weight of heaviest deer ever killed in Virginia, and heaviest one killed this past season. Other interesting information for readers would be the percentage of rifle, shotgun or bow kills made last year, number of deer, bear, and turkey bagged on opening day (as a percentage of total bagged and actual count), percentage of kill on public versus private land, number of non-resident hunters in Virginia, and the hunter success ratio for last year (number of big game licenses as compared to number of deer bagged). This information should be available from game tags.

I saw the page in the February 1975 issue about the annual Big Game Trophy Show, but there was no entry information for the 1975 show.

Larry D. Powell
Fairfax

We'll go to work on the big game kill story idea you've suggested. Final arrangements for the 1975 Big Game Trophy Contests may not be complete, but Game Biologist Max M. Carpenter, Rt. 1, Dayton (22821) may be able to help you. Trophy contest announcement is usually carried in a fall issue of Virginia Wildlife.—Ed.

Wildlife on Tape

IN administering the Virginia program of free library service for the blind and physically handicapped, we are especially interested in adding truly Virginia publications to the national ones provided us by the Library of Congress. We have had many requests for *Virginia Wildlife* in recorded form. With your permission, we would like to offer it to our patrons. The issues, produced in cassette form, will be done by this library and mailed free of charge directly to patrons.

Judith B. Dunham, Librarian
Va. State Library for the Blind &
Physically Handicapped
Richmond

For and "Anti" Hunters

CONGRATULATIONS on the editorial in your February issue, "What Are Anti-Hunters For?" The articles by Mr. Gillam, as well as your other writers on subjects such as this, are the views of so many of us. I am certainly glad to see them written and believe they will go a long way toward creating a greater awareness and understanding of our wildlife by everyone.

Joseph H. Hoge, III
Sandston

I objected strongly to the February "Anti-hunters" editorial. After much thought about guns and gun control, I believe what we need is better enforcement of game laws and "shooting control." I have seen so much reckless shooting in Warren County where I have a second home that I feel something needs to be done.

Dorsey W. Akers
Alexandria

Paint It "Authentic"



By H. LEA LAWRENCE
Nashville, Tennessee

RALPH L. Conner would like to be able to paint a bird song. If he could accomplish this, then his intense desire to produce paintings that are totally authentic and precise in every detail would be better satisfied. As it is, he must be given full credit for trying, because he is given to doing things like backpacking into the mountains just to hear the song of a bird he is painting. By adding this additional facet of research, he establishes a greater amount of "feel" for his subjects. To him, this is a vital element.

Something of this sort is not likely to be surprising to those who are admirers of the superb pieces of work done by this native Virginia artist, since they realize that there is a definite kind of magic involved in his creations. If it lies in this level of dedication necessary to produce them, it can only heighten their appreciation.

Actually, within the past year the area of applause for Conner's works has broadened. From the tremendous response resulting from the initial display of his paintings on the covers of *Virginia Wildlife*, he has moved into the select field of limited edition art. Today, his prints have nationwide distribution, and there are collectors from coast to coast.

That's a long way up for someone who started out roaming the woods as a boy in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Conner was born in Lynchburg, and the hill country of Amherst and Nelson counties were his original territory of exploration. In this environment he had the opportunity to fish for trout, hunt grouse, sketch and observe—all of which helped to provide the rich knowledge of the outdoors that has been of inestimable value to his art.

Over the years, Conner has studied birds all the way from Canada to the Carolinas and West through Ohio, seeking out the locations which were most productive and inspiring.

"I ended up choosing the Appalachian Mountain



Artist Conner is Health Disaster Services representative with the Virginia Department of Health.

counties of Bath and Highland as best suited to my interests," he explains. "In relation to the botanical and bird life, these mountains fall into the transition zone between Canadian and upper austral regions. The variety of wildlife to be found there is amazing, to say nothing of the hunting, fishing and superb beauty of the area. It is from this location that almost all of my paintings have been researched."

At this point, Conner has been drawing birds for over 35 years, and while he insists that his formal art training is minimal, a closer look will indicate that his credentials are much more significant. His mention of "formal" refers to a correspondence course in art that he took in the early fifties; however, he also has a degree in taxidermy, which gave him the familiarity with anatomy, feather tracts, feather structure and other specifics. Beyond that, he has studied biology and ornithology at Lynchburg College, and worked extensively with Cornell's laboratory of ornithology. All of these things gave him the scientific background that fortified his already-present obsession for accuracy. One of his comments illustrates this:

"A wildlife artist in particular should strive for accuracy, not only in size, shape and color of objects, but also their relationship to other habitat material. Is this bird to be found with this plant? This plant to be found with that one? Do these bloom together? All these kinds of things—does it all hang together? I never draw a line without this in mind.

"I also feel strongly about originality because I think it is the most important thing for any artist. An original work, even poorly executed, is of much more value than any copy. The artist who copies is a thief. No matter how well done technically, at least half of his work has been done for him: inspiration—the most vital part!"

For one who thrives on lots of territory in which to

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observe things, Conner has been ideally placed in his area of employment. He has been with the Virginia State Health Department for 23 years, presently serving as a representative of the Disaster Medical Service Program. The job has provided him with a million miles of travel throughout the state and elsewhere, and wildlife has been foremost in his mind during all of his available time.

Because Conner not only observes in the outdoors, but also participates, his trips afield are often a combination of activities. As a result, they take different directions.

"My method," he says, "if I have one as far as field trips go, is so: usually I set up a base camp, tent or trailer, then backpack from there for a night or two, depending on the specific purpose of the trip. If it's trout fishing, I sometimes never leave the base camp. But if each day is going to take me far back into the mountains—native trout fishing, turkey hunting, searching out remote botanicals, etc.—then I pack in. I would recommend solo for this except for the fact that my wife might not necessarily agree.

"Actually, my main interests are those I just mentioned. Otherwise, I like just about anything that involves craftsmanship: woodwork, gun stocks and grips and leatherwork. I used to fly, and building scale models that are radio controlled is an absorbing interest. The outdoors is first, though, and to give up all my interests one by one—including art work—would leave the outdoors."

Conner also writes, and some of his articles have appeared in *Virginia Wildlife* in the past.

Since Conner became associated with Americana Graphics, Inc. of Nashville, Tennessee, the sole distributors for his limited edition prints, two of his works have been released: "Ovenbirds and Pink Lady's Slipper," and "Redtail Hawk." The company has recently announced that the companion piece for one of these prints, "Water Thrushes and Yellow Lady's Slipper," will be issued in the near future.

"Eastern Meadowlark," the newest Conner release by Americana Graphics, is featured on the cover of this issue of *Virginia Wildlife*, marking its initial exposure to the public. This will be the first in a series of popular songbirds which will appear periodically, and which will form a collector format.

Conner and his wife, Gayle, live in Richmond.

Exclusive Offer to Virginia Wildlife Subscribers

The first 450 persons to order a 5-year subscription to *Virginia Wildlife* at \$10 (our regular rate of \$2 per year) using this special form will receive free a 12" X 16" collector's edition of Ralph Conner's meadowlark and vetch as it appears on this month's cover, signed by the artist. This print, a \$15 value, made available exclusively to *Virginia Wildlife* subscribers as part of this special offer to residents of Ralph's home state, is



Great horned owl: a Conner piece.

part of a limited edition of 1500 prints. The combination makes a unique gift, or stretch it into two gifts by giving the magazine to one friend and the print to another. Additional copies of the print may be purchased from local frame houses and art dealers at \$15 each. The publisher, Americana Graphics, Inc., P. O. Box 4666, Nashville, Tenn. 37216, will furnish the names of dealers upon request.

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Trish Sands and Jon Mills repair trail in Fern Valley.

By JAN CURTIS
Information Specialist
USDA Soil Conservation Service
Washington, D.C.

Photos courtesy USDA Soil Conservation Service

Ingredients:

- 20 dedicated young people
- \$13,500
- 20 meaningful and worthwhile jobs
- 7 local governmental units
- 2 or 3 copperheads and assorted other reptiles
- 3 or 4 medium to good cases of poison ivy
- Liberal sprinkling of ticks, chiggers, and mosquitoes
- 8 weeks of hot muggy weather interspersed with old-fashion downpours

Mix well with laughter, enthusiasm, hard physical labor, knowledge, skill, and imagination. Sprinkle liberally throughout the county. Do not bake longer than necessary in 90° weather.



Debi Miller (left) and Sheri Wiegert run laboratory tests on water samples they collected earlier. Findings will be included in a county report on watershed conditions.

THE 4-member team of chefs who originated and perfected the recipe for the Fairfax Co. Youth Conservation Corps (FCYCC) in 1973 is known throughout Fairfax County as the first Youth Board of the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District (NVSWCD) and throughout the state as Virginia's 1973 Youth Conservationists of the Year.

The Board is a decision-making body of young people focusing attention on local natural resource problems and helping citizens develop ways to solve them.

One problem was, as Youth Board member Steve Gissendanner put it, too many kids flipping hamburgers when they should have been out learning and teaching others. Another problem: local agencies lacked personnel and money to carry out needed environmental projects.

The solution proposed by the Youth Board and unanimously approved by the County Board of Supervisors was a county-funded youth conservation corps employing 20 students, high school sophomores through college freshmen. The young people would be paid out of the \$13,500 budget set up by the supervisors, and "farmed out" for 8 weeks to 7 local governmental units to work on environmental conservation projects.

That first summer, FCYCC members inventoried a county park for development as an environmental study area for high school biology students; developed interpretative programs, slide sets, and tours for the public and busloads of summer school students visiting county and regional parks; collected and tested on a weekly basis water samples from several sites in two water-

RECIPE:

YOUTH INVOLVEMENT!

sheds and prepared a report on the findings; helped inventory 40 miles of the Washington and Old Dominion Railroad right-of-way for development as a linear park; worked with the public school system in a special program called Summer Science Institute teaching students water analysis techniques, operation of computers, and field data gathering methods.

A typical day for two FCYCC members, Patricia (Trish) Sands and Karen Rutledge, who was also a member of the Youth Board, started with a 3-hour marsh tour that the girls originated and guided in Pohick Regional Park. Trips were by rowboat for youngsters from families camping in the park and for interested local teachers. During lunch, the girls worked on their slide programs on marsh succession and wild foods which they presented to park visitors in the evenings. The afternoon was spent working in Fern Valley, once an educational fern garden belonging to noted ornithologist Paul Bartsch and his wife, Dr. Elizabeth Bartsch.

Fern Valley, in a deep wooded ravine on the old Lebanon Estate on Mason's Neck, was planted by the couple with more than 70 species of ferns, every native species but one known to grow east of the Mississippi. After Dr. Bartsch died and Mrs. Bartsch moved to McLean, the valley was neglected. When the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority acquired the land in the late 1960's and made it a part of Pohick Regional Park, small carefully laid trails that once laced the garden had grown over with poison ivy and rhododendrons, a tiny creek trickling through the areas and irrigation systems were clogged with sediment and debris, and many ferns were dying. Fragility of the garden prevented use of heavy machinery to restore it, and the Park Authority did not have personnel to do the hand labor.

Karen and Trish volunteered to do the hard physical labor required to make the valley once again an educational garden for people. The two girls ended their summer's work with a wild foods dinner they prepared for more than 40 park visitors.

At Fountainhead Regional Park, three boys constructing new recreation and learning trails found the work hot, dirty, and plagued by mosquitoes, yellow jackets, and an occasional copperhead. But the boys considered the hard labor and copperheads "opportunities." Gary Grey wanted to build muscles; Paul Ayers, to improve his slide program and booklets on snakes. It took Paul, Gary, and Mark Clark two days of repeated at-

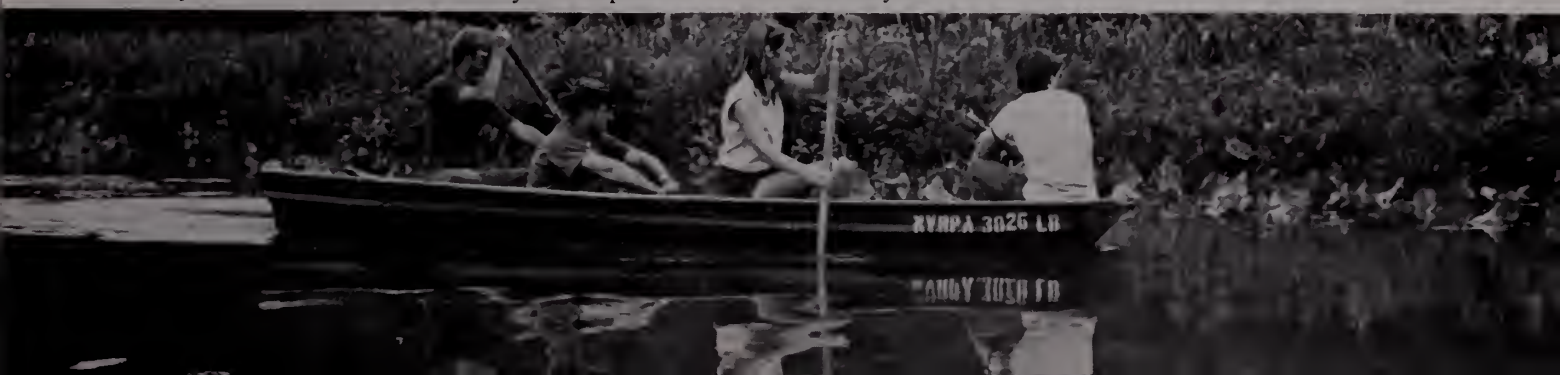
tempts to capture the five-foot copperhead denned up near a trail. They moved him and other copperheads to park areas where they wouldn't conflict with people.

At the Design Review Division of County Development, supervisors were kept busy trying to stay ahead of FCYCC member Darrell Vanover who (1) took water samples at ten assigned sites as part of the division's regular testing program; (2) took periodic additional water samples at construction sites of his own selection and prepared a findings report; (3) walked Accotink Creek and Colvin Run and prepared reports on conditions of the stream valleys showing locations of debris and sediment concentrations; (4) prepared a partial inventory of county ponds to locate control measures needed to protect the ponds during future construction; (5) accompanied erosion-siltation control inspectors on checks of construction sites; and (6) prepared a photographic display of good and poor land use practices in the county.

Success of that 1973 FCYCC program was established when the Board of Supervisors decided to make it a year-round project, expanding the 1974 summer program to \$24,000 for 30 students to work 10 weeks and setting up a 1974 winter school year program with a budget of \$6,400 for 10 students. The county assumed full responsibility for funding and organizing the Corps, freeing future Youth Boards to plan and carry out other community improvement projects.

Work of the first NVSWCD Youth Board has been continued by subsequent Youth Boards and a 20-member Youth Council, organized because the Board decided more young people should be involved in NVSWCD programs. The Council, for which the Youth Board serves as an executive board, is composed of representatives from each of the county's high schools. They have testified before several county ordinance hearings and sponsored the Noteworthy Trees of Fairfax County Contest (designed as an inexpensive way to inventory trees deserving special protection under the Fairfax County Tree Ordinance and to involve local citizens in county environmental programs).

Youth Board and Council are assisted in their efforts by three adult advisors: Charles Koch, district executive for the NVSWCD; Joe Flakne, retired government employee who serves as "inspirational advisor"; and Mrs. Anne Blackburn, an ex-school teacher to whom NVSWCD supervisors give much credit for helping direct the young people without stifling freedom and creativity.



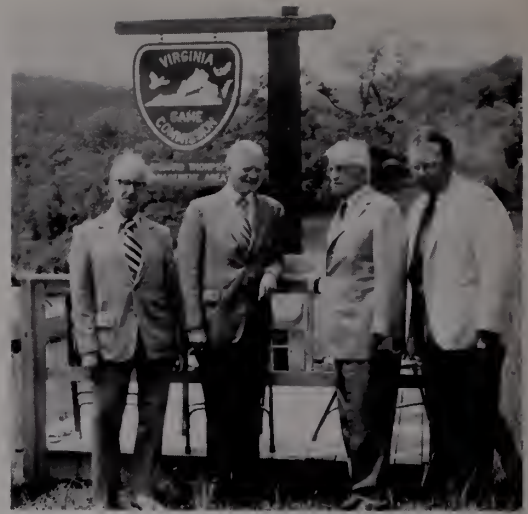
~~APPLE
MANOR~~

G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area

By NED THORNTON
Game Biologist Supervisor

ON a wildlife management area parking lot in Fauquier County, a couple of hunters, decked out in obviously new hunting gear, were chatting during a lunch break with the county game warden. One expressed the opinion that it was about time the Game Commission did something about providing a place "close to home" for northern Virginia hunters to roam during the hunting season. The other sportsman, from Arlington, said he really appreciated the Commission's acquiring the management area since it provided a hunting spot he could reach in less than an hour's driving time, offering him and his sons a place to get outdoors and a chance to bag a squirrel or two. This seems to be the opinion of most hunters encountered at the G. Richard Thompson Wildlife Management Area since it became a public hunting area in 1972. Dedicated on June 7, 1975, under its new name, the former Apple Manor Wildlife Management Area was renamed in honor of former Game Commissioner G. Richard Thompson, who was very instrumental in the original acquisition of the land by the Game Commission.

One of Virginia's newest public hunting areas, the unit is located primarily in western Fauquier County on the east slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains, with very small portions in Warren and Clarke Counties, a short distance from the rapidly growing urban complex in northern Virginia. Because of its proximity to Washington, Alexandria, and the large population centers of northern Virginia, most hunters using the area live in that general vicinity. The management area consists of 3810 acres, acquired in five individual tracts over a period of almost three years, of timberland, most having been logged-over in the past five to eight years, some prior to 1953. Open pasture or grassland is still found on the property's south end just off of Route 688, with a little open land on the north end consisting of abandoned orchards and grassland. Excellent stands of young timber are found in nearly all of the coves and hollows. Twelve-acre Thompson Lake is located just



Commission photo by Satterlee

Game Commission Executive Director C. F. Phelps, Senator Harry F. Byrd, former Game Commission vice chairman G. Richard Thompson, and current Commission chairman W. H. West at June 7 wildlife management area dedication.

off of Route 688 in the northern end of the property. There are several cold springs in the hollow above the lake, one used as water source for irrigating and spraying the apple orchard during the years it was in production.

Wildlife populations on the Area are considered good, with deer, wild turkey, ruffed grouse, and gray squirrel plentiful over most of the Area. Prior to Commission ownership, hunting was extremely limited and harvest of principal game species low; but the potential harvest under public ownership has increased considerably.

Because of the relatively recent timber operation, the Area is in an almost ideal state for most forest game species. Small openings are scattered throughout, and browse is relatively plentiful. Scattered stands of mature oak, white ash, and other hardwoods provide mast and den trees. Because of this situation, very little direct habitat improvement work for wildlife is planned for the immediate future.

Main objective in managing the Area is to provide the maximum number possible of man days of hunting, fishing, and related activities. Major game species to be managed here are deer, wild turkey, gray squirrel, and ruffed grouse, secondary species being bobwhite quail, cottontail rabbit, and the usual "nonconsumptive" wildlife species such as songbirds. Because of the extremely heavy hunting pressure experienced, all roads through the area are closed to vehicular traffic but are open for use as foot trails. All Commission-owned land west of Route 638 on top of the Blue Ridge is closed to hunting because of the small acreage involved and the proximity to summer homes and cottages adjacent to the area. Except for the curtailed deer season, hunting and fishing regulations are the same as for the rest of Fauquier County. No overnight camping is permitted on the Area as there are at present no approved sanitary facilities.

Wild Onion

By ELIZABETH MURRAY
Charlottesville

Illustrated by Lucile Walton

IT may be distressing to some people to think of beautiful lilies in the same family as odoriferous onions. But there they are—lilies, trillium, Solomon's seal, asparagus and onions all grouped into one enormous and extremely fascinating family, the Liliaceae.

A number of liliaceous garden flowers such as lilies themselves, hyacinths, scyllas, star-of-Bethlehem and fritillaries spring from fleshy underground bulbs similar to those of onions. Possession of a large food reserve in the form of a bulb makes possible early growth and flowering although in onions, genus *Allium*, it is only the leaves which show this early growth, the flowers usually blooming much later. In *Allium cernuum* (nodding wild onion) flowers bloom mainly in August.

In all species of *Allium* the inflorescence is an umbel; frequently the flowers are small and pinkish-purple with protruding yellow stamens. Although Kingsbury reports some cases of onion-poisoning in cattle by the wild onion *Allium canadense*, the cows must have eaten tremendous amounts of the plant, because, in general, all members of the genus are considered edible—almost essential for some countries. Where would France be without garlic (*A. sativum*)?

Bulbs of *Allium tricoccum*, the wild leek or ramp, are clustered, like garlic, but the cluster is not covered with a membrane and the cloves are much larger, sometimes more than two inches long and as thick as a man's thumb. In early spring these bulbs each send up a little cylinder of tightly rolled broad leaves, which unroll at the tip until the plant looks like a small garden leek (*Allium Porrum*). Bulbs and leaves can be cut up and cooked. In North Carolina, the approved initiation dish for this piece of wild cooking is "ramps an' rice." Several towns in that state sponsor a Ramp Festival in summer. Ramp bulbs can be used for soup, chopped up in salad dressing, or pickled on their own. The leaves die down in late spring before the naked flower scape, with an umbel of greenish-white flowers, makes its summer appearance. After this dies down ramps must be spotted by pointed bulb tips protruding from the ground.

Various members of the onion genus have succored many Indian tribes and early travelers in this country.

In the Menomini Indian language the word for wild leek is the same as that for skunk (both are smelly). 'Shikako' means 'skunk place' and is the origin of the present name Chicago, in aboriginal times noted as a locality with an abundance of wild leeks. *Allium* is Latin



Allium cernuum, the nodding onion.

for 'garlic' and the Celtic word *all*, meaning 'hot' or 'burning,' describes the effect most members of the genus have on one's eyes.

Allium vineale or field garlic, a very strong, coarse onion with a penetrating odor and taste, is on the whole to be avoided. Cows seem to thrive on it, frequently giving their milk a distinctly garlicky flavor.

Chives or *Allium Schoenoprasum* was introduced from Eurasia and is mainly a cultivated species, with an attractive delicate flavor, excellent for use in soups and salads. *Allium Cepa* is the ordinary onion which has several different varieties and comes originally from Persia. Its close cousin the shallot, *Allium ascalonium*, is cultivated more in Europe than in America which is a pity since it has a fine strong, distinctive flavor.

Nodding onion, *Allium cernuum*, is a modest and attractive member of the genus. It can be recognized by its bell-shaped, rose-colored flowers, in a loose umbel at the end of a flower scape about a foot or more high. The scape is bent back at the top like a shepherd's crook, so that the flowers hang down (as if 'nodding'). Bulbs are about 1/2" wide, 1" high; quite strong; and add considerable flavor to a soup or stew. If used as a vegetable, they are best boiled in two lots of water.

At Mountain Lake, *Allium cernuum* blooms in late August. When highbush blueberries are starting to go over, bottle gentians appear and nodding onion blooms.

Please be sure it is *Allium* you are dealing with before you start chewing on bulbs and early spring leaves. Bulbs of *Ornithogalum* or star-of-Bethlehem are poisonous. Lily-of-the-Valley is poisonous. Leaves of *Veratrum viride* or False Hellebore, which look rather leek-like, are extremely poisonous. There was a severe case of poisoning at the University of Virginia Hospital a few years ago in a young man who had mistakenly chewed on *Veratrum* leaves. Not everything about the lily family is beautiful, good and edible. Before flavoring with wild bulbs, be sure they really are ONIONS.



Chesapeake's

Scenic Waterways

Dismal Swamp.

Commission photo by Harrison

Bass and crappie lure fishermen to wider sections of the Northwest River.

Distinctive road signs mark starting points to each water trail.



By JOE WISEMAN
Virginia Beach

THE city of Chesapeake has within its boundaries some of the most interesting and unique waterways to be found anywhere. Recognizing the value of this recreational resource to present and future generations, the Chesapeake City Council recently designated certain portions of selected rivers, streams and lakes as Chesapeake Scenic Waterways. This bold concept, unique among American cities, stands as a model of cooperation between a local citizens group and municipal government. Working with the Department of Parks and Recreation, a small committee of fishermen, canoeists, birdwatchers, and other outdoor enthusiasts began gathering information about waters in Chesapeake. Field trips over a two-year period and numerous meetings to exchange findings soon produced a list of waterways which had some special characteristics, either historical, natural, or recreational. Additional trips were made to record the significant features of each on film, and a 30-minute color slide presentation was prepared. At this point the citizen group took their case to the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber was favorably impressed, as was the Lion's Club, and other fraternal and civic groups. Climax of the effort was a presentation before the full City Council in Council Chambers. After proper consideration and investigation, the Council approved the Chesapeake Scenic Waterway concept.

Why did this effort succeed, when similar attempts to designate recreation resources often fail? Probably the most important factor in the success of the project was the positive attitude of the committee. The Scenic Waterway Concept is not designed to keep anyone away from anything. To the contrary, the idea is to better prepare people to use and enjoy Chesapeake's rivers and lakes through education and guidance. Better to have increased usage by a public sensitive to the fragile nature of the waterway system, than occasional use by the unconcerned leaving behind a trail of sardine tins and soft drink cans; not through malice, but ignorance.

To introduce Chesapeake Scenic Waterways to the public, the Department of Parks and Recreation has prepared a color brochure presenting six such water trails, offering suggestions for their safe and enjoyable use. A pull-out map shows location of each trail relative to prominent highways or other landmarks, and points out items of special interest along the waterway. Distinctive roadside markers, placed at strategic places to assist in the identification of starting points for each trip, are correlated with the brochure and map.

Canoeists should consider the middle section of the Northwest River, designated as trail number three. A mere stream at the starting point, the Northwest passes through dense woodlands, and the stealthy paddler may observe whitetail deer, raccoon, opossum, squirrel, muskrat, and many species of birdlife. In warm weather

reptiles are often seen, but offer no threat whatsoever unless molested. The current is mild, and the black cypress tinted water harbors the chain pickerel, especially active in February and March. About halfway through the eight-mile run, the Northwest begins to widen and occasional islands form coves and inlets which invite exploration. Largemouth bass, crappie, bream, and sunfish are caught in good numbers in wider sections of the river, making it a popular spot for local anglers. The highway bridge at Route 168 marks the end of the eight-mile course. For a leisurely trip, with time out for lunch, allow at least six hours.

Of special interest to photographers and nature buffs is trail number two, though its title, "Feederditch," is hardly enticing. This name is used by local residents to describe the three and one half mile long, man-made canal which connects the George Washington Canal (part of the Intra Coastal Waterway) with Lake Drummond, in the heart of the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. Paddle craft and motorized boats can both be used to navigate the three miles to a spillway maintained by the Army Corps of Engineers. Overnight camping is permitted on the small reservation, though facilities are small and rather primitive (but scrupulously clean). A short portage is necessary around the spillway and a motorized trolley, that you have to see to believe, transports powerboats of moderate size overland, and deposits them back in the canal. Continuing for approximately one half mile down the ever narrowing waterway, the visitor begins to feel as if he is passing through a green, tree-lined tunnel when suddenly—Lake Drummond.

After the narrow confines of the Feederditch, the unbroken expanse of Lake Drummond appears immense. Viewed for the first time, many simply stare in disbelief, wondering what grand design placed this three thousand acre body of fresh water in the midst of a nearly impenetrable swamp. Ancient cypress trees, whose exact age is but one of the many secrets that the swamp has yet to reveal, stand silent vigil; reaching skyward with gnarled branches, and downward with twisted roots to the black peat of the lake bottom.

The hours have a way of slipping away as one pokes and probes the shoreline of Lake Drummond, and care must be taken to allow adequate time for the return trip. For those not owning a boat who might wish to take a trip into the Great Dismal via the Feederditch, commercial guided tours are usually available during the summer months. Group trips into the interior of the swamp, led by Refuge personnel, are also available in spring and fall on a "as time permits" basis. For possible inclusion in such a trip and other information about the refuge, write: Refuge Manager, Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, 200 N. Main Street, Suffolk, Virginia 23434. For a copy of the Chesapeake Scenic Waterways Brochure, contact the Department of Parks, P. O. Box 15225, Chesapeake, Va. 23320.

It's Time To Talk

By DEANE DOZIER

Waynesboro

IF you like a good argument, go to Alaska and mention the pipeline. Bring up the subject of polluting Lake Erie when you're in Ohio. Floridians will feud about the Everglades at the drop of a hat, and West Virginians can really tear into strip mining.

But you really don't need to travel anywhere. You can bring out the buckshot right here in Virginia by mentioning stream channelization—or putting a bulldozer in a stream.

You won't find much middle ground. Camped on one side, their defenses strong, are the agencies doing the work. At a stand-off on the other side, spears sharpened, are the conservationists trying to stop them, or get them to do it another way. Stranded in the middle are a few confused landowners, wondering who to believe—the agencies telling them they need stream work to protect them from flooding, or the conservationists telling them it'll do more harm than good.

The battle has reverberated from the banks of the Bullpasture, James and other rivers throughout the state to the halls of Congress, at times sounding more like the feuding of the Hatfields and McCoys than anything civilized.

One thing's for sure: putting a bulldozer in a stream is no longer taken lightly in this state, or in any other. But as long as the parties involved fight with anger rather than logic, a stalemate will continue. As in most issues, the truth probably lies somewhere in between, with neither side having all the right answers.

The best ways of repairing damage to stream channels and protecting a landowner from flooding, while preserving the intrinsic value of the streams for all to use and enjoy, are yet to be devised.

The chance to do just that may be at hand. Both sides have decided to sheath their swords and try—together—to solve some of the basic problems of stream channel modification. Engineers are being invited. Distinguished scientists from all parts of the country. Biologists. Hydrologists. And you. A three-day symposium on stream channel modification has been set for Friday, Aug. 15, through Sunday, Aug. 17, at the Belle Meade Red Carpet Inn in Harrisonburg.

Organizers of the event are encouraging everyone interested to participate—on one condition. No name calling. No outbursts. No temper tantrums. Not this time. The symposium is being arranged on the premise that both sides have something to say, and it's high time for some listening.

On Saturday morning, agencies who modify streams will explain their purposes. On Saturday afternoon, biologists will discuss the short- and long-term effects of stream modification. Restoration of modified streams, and alternatives to modification, will also be discussed. That evening, the audience will raise questions to be answered by a "Panel of Experts"—engineers, biologists, conservationists and others. Sunday morning, a bus tour of modified streams will provide a workshop for considering points brought out during the symposium. Cost of the symposium, including Saturday night's banquet, is approximately \$15. For a registration form or more information about the symposium, fill out the form on this page.

Stream Symposium

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

(Tentative)

FRIDAY

5 to 6 p.m.:	Registration
6 to 7 p.m.:	Fish Fry
7 to 10 p.m.:	Social

SATURDAY

9 to 10 a.m.:	Keynote Address: Dr. Robert Putz, Assoc. Director of Research, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Washington, DC
10 to 10:30 a.m.:	Coffee
10:30 to 12 noon:	Session I: "Objectives of Agencies that Modify Stream Channels," Franklin Dugan, SCS, Chairman
12 noon to 1:30 p.m.:	Lunch (on your own)
1:30 to 3 p.m.:	Session II: "Biological Considerations," Monte Seehorn, US Forest Service, Atlanta, Chairman <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Short-term Effects2. Long-term Effects, Cold and Warm Water Streams
3 to 3:30 p.m.:	Coffee
3:30 to 5 p.m.:	Session III: "Stream Modification Alternatives and Methods of Litigation or Enhancement," Dr. Lawrence Jahn, Wildlife Management Institute, Washington, DC, Chairman
7 to 8:30 p.m.:	Banquet, Entertainment
8:30 to 9:30 p.m.:	"Panel of Experts," Dr. Robert Raleigh, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Blacksburg, Moderator

SUNDAY

9 a.m. to 12 noon:	Bus Tour of Modified Streams
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Please send a registration form, with information about the symposium, to the following address:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE: _____

(Mail to Stream Symposium, 160 DuPont Circle, Waynesboro, Va. 22980.)

CONSERVATIONGRAM

Commission Activities and Late Wildlife News . . . At A Glance

NEW 1975 GAME AND FISH LAW SUMMARIES will be available by late this month, according to the Game Commission's Education Division. The colorful summaries list the dates for the upcoming seasons as well as offering brief summaries of important rules and regulations. Copies of the 1975 hunting and fishing laws will be available at license agents, from your local warden or at the Commission office, 4010 W. Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23230.

LIVING SPACE FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES. The critical living space requirements for 108 endangered animals in the United States are the subject of a nationwide survey by the Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service with special attention being given to 10 high priority animals. This proposal was published in the Federal Register. Public comments are invited through July 16. All Federal, State and private agencies, organizations or individuals concerned with endangered and threatened species are asked to submit information and maps that would assist in delineating the "critical habitat" of all 108 species currently appearing on the endangered and threatened species list for the United States and Puerto Rico. Critical habitat could be considered the living space necessary for the normal needs and survival of an animal. It could also include the animal's nutritional requirements such as food, water or minerals as well as sites for breeding, reproduction or rearing of offspring and space for cover or shelter normally required by the animal. Additionally, the term could encompass any other biological, physical or behavioral requirements an animal may have. Additional information may be obtained from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, DC 20240.

HATHAWAY CONFIRMED AS INTERIOR SECRETARY. In what was counted as a close vote by environmental and consumer groups who opposed his nomination, Ex-Wyoming Governor Stanley K. Hathaway was confirmed by the Senate on a vote of 60 to 36. It was noted by the opposition that the Senate hasn't rejected any Presidential nomination to a cabinet post in more than two decades.

RAPPAHANNOCK WILDLIFE AREA PURCHASE ANNOUNCED. Tracts of land totaling approximately 3,800 acres on the upper Rappahannock River will be acquired through joint efforts of the Virginia Game Commission and The Nature Conservancy, a private national land conservation organization, and will become the State's newest wildlife management area. The new Rappahannock Wildlife Management Area will be in Fauquier County near the community of Summerduck and will include about 5½ miles of river front extending to a point about 2 miles below Kellys Ford, in an area that is under study by the Commission of Outdoor Recreation for possible designation by the General Assembly as a State Scenic River. The project is expected to cost about 3.5 million dollars. Land for the new Rappahannock wildlife area will be purchased from present owners by The Nature Conservancy and will be sold to the Commission at the Conservancy's costs in increments as appropriations from the State Game Protection Fund become available. It is expected that the acquisition can be completed during the next two years. The Nature Conservancy is a non-profit organization that frequently assists federal, State and local agencies in acquiring lands for wildlife management, natural areas and other conservation purposes. In the past they have been instrumental in the acquisition of the Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, the expansion of Virginia's park program and the preservation of offshore islands along the Eastern Shore, in addition to assisting in the acquisition of Wildlife Management Areas. Public ownership of the Rappahannock property will preserve the unique scenic, historic and recreational value of the area and will provide public access to the upper Rappahannock River for fishing and boating as well as being a new public hunting area for Northern Virginia.



Commission photos by Satterlee

Va. State Game Warden J. J. Westbrook receiving radio message.

GAME WARDEN: MAN ON CALL

By LINWOOD NORMAN
Richmond

A BIG, green Plymouth sat perched at Deep Bottom Harbor. Its two occupants peered at the choppy roughness of the James River, contemplating launching a motorboat.

"Too many white caps. We won't go in today," one said. "Anyway, looks like there's no one to check."

The boat is unhitched at the harbor, to be retrieved later in the day. And with that, the big car drives off. Inside, game wardens Frederick R. "Buck" Burruss and J. J. Westbrook set off for another day as Nature's watchdogs, roaming creeks, ponds and rivers for possible fishing and hunting violations. They stop along the road now and then to briefly chat with area residents, lost tourists, and seasoned fishermen spending a lazy afternoon with the rod and reel.

The two men travel back roads of Henrico and sections of Charles City and Chesterfield counties in search of possible violations against the natural wildlife environment. Burruss is a special warden (part-time) who is actually Westbrook's righthand man. These buddies share a passionate interest in the natural resources they protect.

"There are possibly dangerous situations," Burruss says, "such as stopping a car in the middle of the night to check permits of deer poachers. When it's you against three or four men in the car, there is the possibility of something happening. But I suppose the fact that I could get to the mobile radio for an emergency call has a lot to do with it."

One common nuisance for game wardens is investigating reports of "spotlighting" during the night. Often during deer season, illegal hunters shine a special spotlight attached to their car, or its headlights, into the woods to stake out and kill deer. If someone is caught spotlighting after 10 p.m., he forfeits automobile and gun until his case is brought before the judge. Fine ranges from \$25 to \$150, with up to ten days in jail.

Suddenly the conversation surrenders to one of three special radios in the car. This time the Henrico Police want some information.

"Is there any hunting going on now?" someone asks.

"Yea, groundhogs," uttered Westbrook.

"Can a fella carry a gun on a wildlife management area?"

"You can't hunt on a management area now," Westbrook countered.

"He said he's headed for the Appomattox River."

"Well, he better have a permit before his line goes in the water. If he doesn't, the warden there will catch up with him."

The patrol car continues down winding Route 5, to Bailey's Creek. Here, three generations of a family sit by the shallow stream named for a Bailey of some unknown origin. An aging, white-haired grandfather in ragged clothes keeps a vigilant eye on his three pre-school grandchildren engaged in a stick battle. His own son, about 30, stands ankle-high in water, "dippin' herrin'" in this creek where herring return to spawn each spring.

The man withdraws his net from the water and comes on shore to meet Burruss, who asks to see his fishing permit. As Burruss inspects the license, a school of herring breaststroke into the shallowest area of the stream to see what is going on.

"I'm sorry, but this isn't a valid permit. It's a Charles City County permit, and you're fishing inside Henrico County."

"I thought this was Charles City. I didn't know."

"Ah, come on and follow me back to the car," Burruss told him.

From where the silent grandfather sits, one can see Burruss and the man talking for a few minutes with Westbrook by the car. No summons is issued.

"It's better public relations work not to ticket him," said Burruss, while driving again down Rt. 5. "He was with his family, and I didn't want to embarrass him." Had he fished on private property, the trespassing fine could have been ten to one hundred dollars, usually seventy five.

"Also," added Westbrook, "there's a certain contro-

versy over fishing permits that ought to be straightened out. People like that fisherman back there should be educated to buy state licenses and not a county license which is good for one county only."

The car slowly pulls up at the Deepwater Terminal on the James River. Cloudy sky still rumbles anxiously to rain, and the wind-tossed river continues to agitate two small boats which float alone in opposite directions.

"There is no closed fishing season on the James; best months are usually May and June, but often the water is really muddy then," said Burruss. "October is also a good month. You can catch the tastiest small-mouth bass, sometimes five to seven pounders."

The game warden does not hoard his knowledge of practical, time-saving methods; he is responsible for such public relations work as addressing adult and youth groups on topics of wildlife conservation and hunting and boating safety. On occasion, he works with game and fish biologists on various management and research projects.

Stringent qualifications for the job of warden closely emulate those criteria for policemen and other public servants. One must be neither too young nor too old (age: 21-34 inclusive), nor too short (5'8"-6'4"), nor too heavy (150-220 lbs.); and weight-height ratio must be reasonable. Also, vision less than 20/40 in each eye (without glasses) is unacceptable. Applicants must score successfully on written tests and a physical examination, as well as on a strength and agility test. A rigid moral and character investigation is conducted. The new employee must serve at least one year in a trainee status, and accept duty at any location in the state.

Westbrook, typical of any game warden, supposedly works a five-day week. "I received 3,365 calls after hours in eleven months, sometimes 25 to 30 calls a night. "Ninety-five percent of the time I'm away by 7 a.m. so I won't get stuck at the phone. In winter,

people call up to report spotlightin' when they see car lights shine across their property. A warden might spend 16 to 20 hours during a weekend staking out in a field for possible deer poachers."

The Commission radio magnets the two men back to the car on a call to Shirley Plantation, with reports of fishing on private property. The long journey is almost completed as the poplar-lined driveway affords a vista of the large lake, an offshoot of the James. Despite the 20-minute drive, two teenage boys stand fly-casting from a granite mound by the water's edge.

Usual procedure is followed, and both boys are discovered to be without a valid permit. This time two fishing tickets are written, followed by a terse discussion of the penalty for trespassing.

"You could be fined from ten to one-hundred dollars for coming onto private property. The law respects property rights; you two are clearly in violation."

The two offenders stand awkwardly with their hands in their pockets, looking mostly at the ground.

"The ticket is enough this time," continued Westbrook, "but don't let me catch you again, here or anywhere else you shouldn't be."

The boys load their tackle onto their bikes as the two wardens maintain a close surveillance from the car. One holds a bucket containing a few fish whose price is dear, compared to the local seafood markets. (The no-license fine is close to fifteen dollars.)

Commission policy states a game warden may retire at age sixty, provided he has thirty years' service. Westbrook, who has worked with the Commission since 1946, will have served that requirement within one more year. A tanned appearance deceptively hides his 62 years.

What are his plans for the future? "I'm going to work until I'm sixty-five because I love it. And the first thing I do when I retire is change my phone number!!!"

Warden Westbrook and Data Processing Supervisor J. A. Cox, Jr., discuss magazine subscriber renewal list.



This osprey and other mounts are often displayed as part of the Commission's educational program.



Know Your WARDENS



Text and Photos
By
F. N. SATTERLEE
Information Officer

SIDNEY J. AKERS
Warden, Chesapeake, Virginia

A NAMOSA, Iowa, was the birthplace of Sidney J. Akers but short was his stay in that location for when he was two, the family moved to Mitchell, Indiana, thence to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and when Sid was a twelve-year-old, to Lynchburg, Virginia. It was there that the family put down roots. It was also the area where Sid and his father really began to enjoy the outdoors, fishing (especially for trout), and hunting.

Graduating from E. C. Glass High School in Lynchburg, Sidney entered Central Virginia Community College attending part time while also holding down a job with a grocery concern.

He received an AA degree from that institution in 1971 and, while looking for some permanent employment, continued to work in the food business. In September of that same year he applied for and was accepted as warden with the Game Commission. Having hunted and fished and enjoyed the out-of-doors for all of his young life, being accepted as a Game Warden was the answer to his search for a goal in life. In February of 1972, he was assigned to duty in Virginia Beach. After approximately one year, he was transferred to his current location, Chesapeake, Virginia.

To Sid the most interesting and satisfying aspect of his work is being able to associate with sportsmen and especially young people and to help them to better understand wildlife and our precious resources. He is especially interested in teaching hunter safety and boating safety and helping to enforce the laws protecting wildlife and conservation. This is in order to assure the future generations opportunities to appreciate these God-given gifts.

Sidney is married to the former Alice Mays of Lynchburg. The couple has one child, a son, and they reside in Chesapeake, Virginia.

I LOVE THE FINS

By SAMUEL PARSONS
Lynchburg

WHAT can be more satisfying to a man than eating his own catch, fixing it himself the way he likes best? Take this rainy lazy day morning for example: I leisurely got up, read the Sunday morning funnies, and then, feeling I had denied myself long enough, went into the kitchen. There was a tinge of excitement in my stomach.

I began making coffee, getting dishes and frying pans out, and adjusting the radio. I like to listen to the radio while I'm eating. Then I went to the icebox and got a fresh stick of real butter, couple of eggs and the trout: THE TROUT. Boy what trout they were. And they still had most of their color: charcoal belly, orange fins, pink sides with brilliant red dots, brown mottling covering the head and top part of the body.

The day before, of course, I had been trout fishing. Snow covered the ground, and as you might imagine, it was pretty cold. But that doesn't stop me. When I get it into my head that I want to fish, I fish no matter what happens. Once this bullheadedness cost me a wife. I was going to meet her parents on my day off. However, the night before I was to ask for her hand a friend came over and we drank a few beers while talking about streams and lakes and rivers and what was in them. It wasn't long before my friend enlightened me on certain priorities that must be taken on your only day off and I wasn't hard to convince. I tried to explain to my fiancée over the phone that I would make it back late in the afternoon and still have time for the formalities concerning the wedding. But she became almost hysterical and wouldn't listen. I attempted to calm her but it was too late. I had to decide between a fish or a wife and home and security. I began gathering flies, fly rod and creel after several moments of grueling deliberation.

Not to get sidetracked, yesterday I caught some nice fish. Although the snow was deep, the sun was bright and made the day very pleasant. The sky looked intensely blue, contrasting against the snowy mountains.

The small creek I was fishing was impressive to look at. It was clear and clean and running strong. It had nice pools, a normal amount of log jams, undercut banks, fallen trees, boulders, sand bars, deep pockets—all the places trout love. The stream was proper. And was also loaded with brookies.

The reason it was loaded with brookies is that to fish the creek you had to have hatchets for hands. The rhododendron was so thick and bushy it was almost impenetrable. It grew by and over the stream. It must be there for reasons of protection. "Let's make a deal," the rhododendron probably said to the creek hundreds of years ago. "You supply me with water and I will grow thick and large and impossible to get through. This will keep out people who will one day discover you and how many fish are nestled inside you. I will discourage them." And it does, except for a few fools.

I sat at this one hole for a long time. It was deceptive. When you first looked at it, you didn't realize all the pockets that were in it. It had three little falls, and the water swirled under the falls. The swirls washed together passing a large submerged rock, then shot through a deep rocky bottom channel, with undercut banks and jutting boulders on each side. A fine place for trout. I caught three in that spot: two good ones from their front yards and a smaller one probably coming home from visiting a friend. As I left the hole, the sun struck the water in a way that made the rocky bottom look amber, as if it were whiskey in a bottle held up to light. It made me dreamy. I got out one of the brookies and held him to the sunlight. I thought of his ancestors who had lived there for thousands of years. I affectionately kissed him on the big mottled head and stuffed him back into the creel.

I caught and released a bunch of fish yesterday. They were biting well. I kept six, freezing two and having

four to accompany eggs for this morning's breakfast. I regretted leaving that unspoiled water. It was really amazing. Here in eastern United States is a stream full of wild, natural trout, surrounded by high, rough mountains with a dirt road that puts you within a hundred yards of it, and no sign of human life: no beer cans, Vienna sausage cans, empty cigarette packs, Dr. Pepper bottles, wine bottles or used bait boxes.

These really are tasty; fried crisp in deep butter with lemon smeared on the sides. The secret is to know when to turn them. The eyes become chalky white. Sometimes when you flip a fish over, the eyes stick to the bottom of the pan. I always scrape the pan anyway to capture any morsel overlooked.

I eat the small ones—bones and all. I pick them up by the head, stick the body in my mouth, and CHOMP, all gone. The bones are soft and break up chewy and delicious. You never have to worry about one sticking in your throat.

The trout's sparkling color is visible even after they are fried, especially the fins. I love the fins. They're as crisp as potato chips with a flavor so delectable it brings shivers up your backbone. What hors d'oeuvres they would make, served orange and crispy on a large silver platter.

"Please, have one. They're really delicious."

"Ummm, they are good. What are they?"

"Fish fins—hey, don't be wasting them like that. It took me days to catch enough to supply this party. And all over my new rug too."

Commission photo by Harrison





Live bluebird really "sets off" this cap.

By JEANNE PRICE
Lorton

Photos by John Price

IT was a pitiful sight! Eyes still closed, he was sitting among his dead brothers and sisters in the bluebird box. I had called Bob Hahn, who bands all birds on the Bluebird Trail at Gunston Hall Plantation, and told him we had not seen the male eastern bluebird for days and the female was coming less often, even though the babies had been hatched a full week. Watching the box through binoculars, I had been alarmed to find she let as much as two hours pass before coming with food.

Bob, a schoolteacher, decided to take the surviving baby with him. With the bird in a cage on his desk, he had plenty of voices to remind him when 15 minutes were up and time to feed the youngster again. When Blueboy was three weeks old and doing very well, Bob telephoned and asked if I could take over care of the fledgling since the baby now needed the freedom of a screened porch to try his wings. I had just bought new furniture and a rug for our big porch off the living room and turned from the phone and asked my husband how he felt about it. Immediately he answered, "Anything for bluebirds. Tell Bob to bring the bird out."

Bluebird On My Shoulder

We had never raised a wild bird before, but all the staff at Gunston Hall had become very interested in bluebirds. The plantation had been the home of George Mason, one of the Founding Fathers of our country, the author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights from which our nation's Bill of Rights was taken. The 556-acre estate with a lovely house finished in 1758 and beautiful formal boxwood gardens is open to the public every day except Christmas. Since we endeavor to show visitors how our Colonial ancestors lived, we needed bluebirds and as many as we could coax to live here on the Virginia shore of the Potomac. The early settlers had found bluebirds in America and became so attached to them that they called them "blue robins" after their favorite little bird in England.

From the moment Blueboy arrived in mid-June the family and all our friends and visitors were captivated by his sweet chirping and endearing personality. In fact, we were enslaved by his charm; feeding him or watching him bathe or fly around was a delight. This little eastern bluebird had just a few blue feathers among the gray and tan that covered his body, and his bright bill was continually open for food. We fed him ground lean beef mixed with hard-boiled egg yolk, scraped dog biscuit and calcium dibasic phosphate with Vitamin D (to build better bones). At three weeks I fed him every 30 minutes from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. (not much time for housework!) from the blunt end of a toothpick. I had to hold on to the toothpick very firmly, or he would have swallowed everything.

At first we put Blueboy back in his cage at night and covered half of it. He would sleep on his perch and seemed to feel safe there. The cage was left on the dining room table, and two doors were closed between that room and our bedroom on the second floor; but still I would be awakened about 6:30 every morning by his persistent chirping for attention. When he was outside, I could hear him from 300 yards away, above all the numerous bird songs in the gardens. How well I understood how a mother bird could hear the cries of her baby and wing straight to its side! It was a sweet but clear call.

As soon as he was dressed in the morning, my husband was sent to the vegetable garden to dig earth-

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE



At 4 months, Blueboy's down was dropping out, revealing a lovely rust-colored breast.

worms and put them in a glass jar, for we added these delectables to the diet. Cut in small pieces, they were hand fed. When he could eat a whole worm he slurped it down like spaghetti. Sometimes to our amusement the worm would be too long for him, and we'd see him standing very still with the worm slowly reappearing out through his bill. About the time an inch of earthworm would show up, he'd gulp again and it would disappear for good.

Blueboy would wait for me on the back of the chair nearest to the porch door, and before I could get the door fully opened and step over the threshold he would fly to my shoulder or land on my head. After a few "words" he would fly straight to the glass jar of worms and wait for a handout. Soon we made him pick up the worms himself from the tabletop. He was very clever in the way he maneuvered around the crawling worm to find the best angle for attack.

It was not just food Blueboy wanted from us. He loved to tuck himself under the collar of my shirt and rest up against my neck, chirping very softly in my ear. He was in ecstasy when I stroked his little head and back gently while he sat in the nest of my cupped hand; soon he would be fast asleep. And there I'd be left with a handful of sleeping bluebird!

After he was four weeks old, I started taking him out on the lawn. He would always stay within sight, never flying up into tall trees, and had no trouble finding his own bugs and caterpillars. He was most obedient and flew to my shoulder whenever I called. Finally, I would leave him out a good part of the day. On hearing my voice coming from a room with open window he would fly around the outside of the house and cling to the screen, begging to join me.

Blueboy's worst enemies were other bluebirds. In a flash the adults would dive on him and peck him. He always fought back bravely, but it was a bewildering experience for him. Other birds paid no attention to him. When he heard the song of a bluebird he would stand very still, lift his head and listen; but the songs

of mockingbirds, wrens, or any other birds seemed to fall on deaf ears.

Each July we have a Colonial Crafts Show at Gunston Hall, and crowds of people attend. This event is held beneath rows of old red cedars along the road to the graveyard. I took Blueboy over to the show so the children could see what an eastern bluebird looked like and to explain how we must protect them and bring them back now that there are so few compared to 50 years ago. To my amazement he remained within easy reach and flew from child to child, staying long enough for them to look him over. He was getting prettier now. Sometimes he would drop to the ground to pick up a bug no one had seen, swallow it, then fly to another child. The wonder in their eyes as they held the little bird, barely daring to move or take a breath, was beautiful. One little four-year-old gently handed me the fledgling and whispered "Here's your little bird."

The day finally came when Blueboy was ready to be completely on his own. He was six weeks old. Instead of bringing him into the porch at dusk, I left him outside. He seemed perfectly satisfied and flew away to find a perch. It was as bad as the first night our teenage son had the car! I thought of cats, hawks, owls, but never a bad storm, and that's what we had. I was awakened in the middle of the night by a deluge. Where was he? Could he survive so much rain? Had he remembered to use the little oil gland on the top of his tail to waterproof his feathers? I finally got back to sleep; but even before the alarm went off I sprang out of bed, ran straight out on the lawn, and whistled for my little bird. Within seconds a flash of blue came flying around the corner of the house, landing on my welcoming hand. Blueboy was as full of joy as ever and looked none the worse for his night out. I wanted to hug him.

Soon I had a bigger problem. Blueboy was just too friendly—a real people lover. It was all right for him to join the gardeners in the mornings and sit on their heads or cling to their pants until they had turned over worms for him; but now he was dropping down on the



Young Campfire girls known as Bluebirds bring boxes for Gunston Hall's bluebird trail.

Bluebird on My Shoulder

(Continued)

table in our public picnic area. I'd hear excited screams from tourists, and then someone would say "It's a wild bird! And look; it's banded. Must belong to someone." So few people had seen an eastern bluebird that most of them did not have any idea what kind of bird he was.

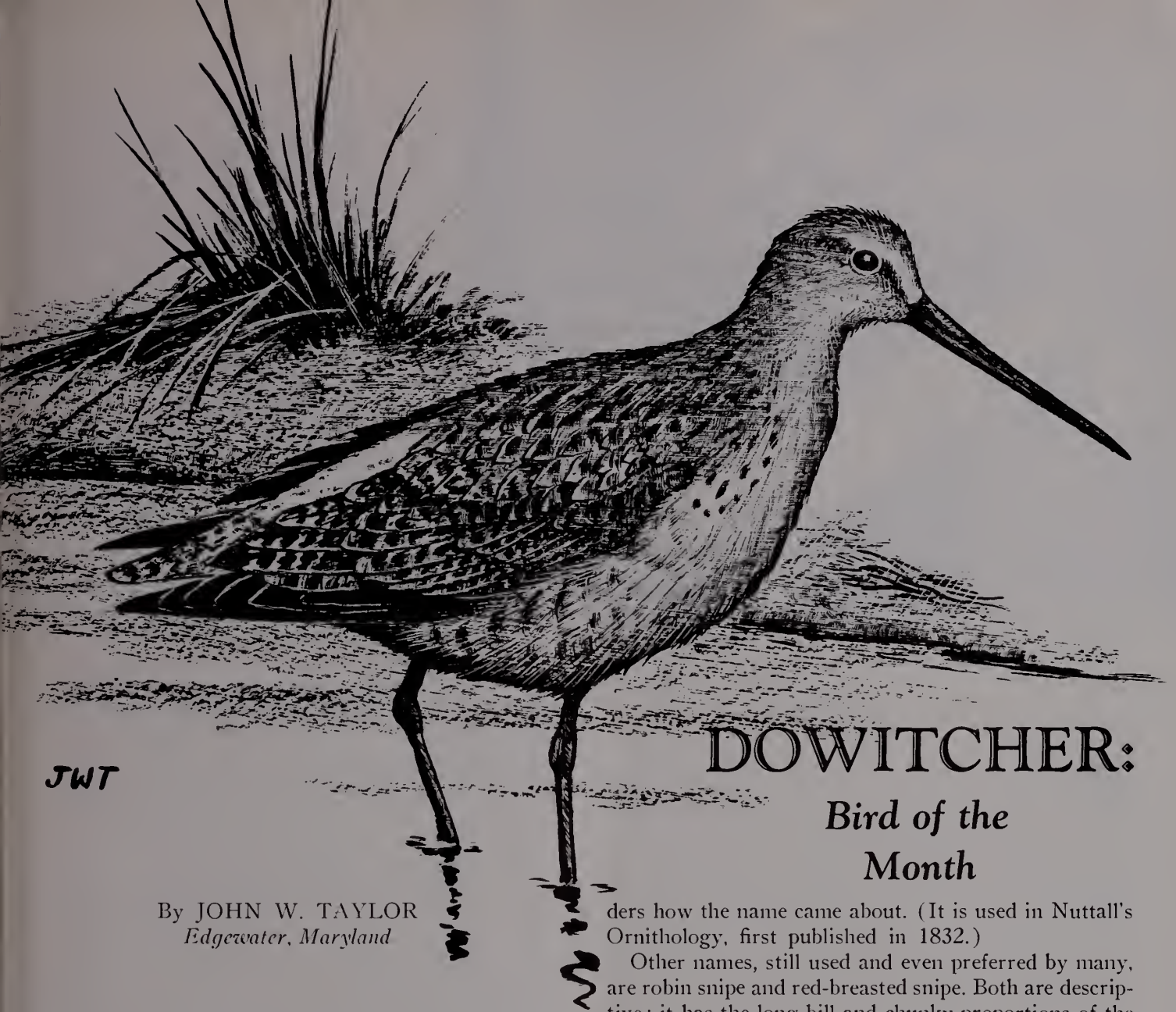
I began to fear that some thoughtless person would take this unique treasure home and cage him. At the end of a week of rescuing the little fellow and bringing him home, I was amazed to have him stop making these trips to the picnic area altogether. He had selected a territory for himself, the big woods behind our garage. A pair of adult bluebirds, raising their third brood of the summer in a box next to his territory, were apparently willing for him to be so close; but he was not to cross over the fence that ran along one side of the garage. Blueboy was always careful not to invade another territory. When I carried him to our other bird-bath, across the garden, he would have a quick drink and then fly directly back to his own area, not delaying even long enough for a bath. He loved to come when I called him to show off for visitors, but we had to be standing in his own territory.

My husband and I had planned a trip to Switzerland and Austria in August. A friend promised to leave raisins out on a fence post for Blueboy every day. It was the most enjoyable trip we ever had, and when we arrived home at midnight after two weeks absence, I thought that if Blueboy is here in the morning my cup

will run over. I jumped out of bed early and ran out to the garage. I whistled softly and in two minutes he came flying straight as an arrow out of the woods, landing on my shoulder and chirping excitedly. Bright blue patches were on his back, and he was losing all the little down, revealing a soft rust colored breast. How glad he seemed to be that I'd returned! He joined me each time I walked out of the house, and would take walks with me, flying from tree to tree. He seemed as tame as ever, but not so afraid to leave his territory. Most of the birds were through nesting for the summer and were friendlier to each other. Little did I know it was the beginning of the end of our close relationship.

By the time Blueboy was four months old he was coming to me less and less often. Oh, I saw him often enough, but he would chirp at me from a high branch, as if to say "I'm doing fine. Don't worry about me anymore." One day I found him with five other bluebirds in a pine grove, and it was clear that he didn't want to jeopardize his position with his new friends by associating with a human. In early evening a few days later, I was walking in the garden when I heard the familiar sweet call from a locust tree. His little head was cocked, and he was looking right at me while he sang. Presently he dropped to a lower branch and a friend joined him—a little female from this summer's fledglings.

There's no more bluebird on my shoulder, but still joy in my heart. That's what our little Blueboy gave to everyone he met—a great surge of unforgettable joy.



JWT

By JOHN W. TAYLOR
Edgewater, Maryland

DOWITCHER:

Bird of the Month

IN early May, when shorebird migration is in full force, the flight note of the dowitcher is the most characteristic call of the salt flats. It falls sweetly from the spring sky as flocks pass over high, tundra bound, or lower, when merely moving into the adjacent marsh to await the next tide. The sound embodies the very spirit of this special time and place.

A soft, melodious triplet, the note has been rendered phonetically as "ti-li-loo" or "ti-di-loo," accented on the first syllable. Sometimes other notes are added, and there are variations and combinations, but the three-note call is the most typical.

The name "dowitcher" itself is supposed by some to be a verbalization of this call. It is a poor imitation, and recalls none of the mellow, whistling quality of the bird's voice. More likely the term has derived from an early name, "Deutscher's snipe" or German snipe, to distinguish it from the Wilson's or English snipe. "Deutscher" could logically have become "dowitcher." They are not, however, native to Europe and one won-

ders how the name came about. (It is used in Nuttall's Ornithology, first published in 1832.)

Other names, still used and even preferred by many, are robin snipe and red-breasted snipe. Both are descriptive: it has the long bill and chunky proportions of the snipe, and spring birds are a delicate rusty-pink on the sides and underparts. The names are less apt in the fall, when the birds are gray-breasted.

A good field mark in any plumage is the white lower back and rump. The white extends farther up the back than in other light rumped shorebirds. Also distinctive is the rapid, jabbing feeding motion, the bill moving up and down perpendicularly like a sewing machine.

Ornithologists now recognize two kinds of dowitchers, the short-billed and the long-billed. Once considered races of the same form, they are now given full species status, though field identification is not always possible, even for the expert. The short-bill is the eastern representative and is the most frequent on our coasts, passing to the north in migration during May, and returning on the southward journey during July and August. The western nesting long-bills were once considered quite rare hereabouts, but recent field work has indicated that they may pass through regularly, especially in the fall, when they move through later than the short-bills.



Muskies

in the Shadow of the

White

House

Author's 37 inch, 15 lb. Burke Lake muskie was landed on a cold, rainy, March day.

By MIKE PANE
Stafford

WHERE I grew up, catching muskies was an exotic dream akin to bonefishing and elk hunting.

We had plenty of their small cousins, the Eastern chain pickerel, but no muskies. Since I had cut my fishing teeth catching pickerel on light tackle, I thought I had an idea what catching a muskie would be like. It turned out my idea was nothing like the real thing. And the fact that my first muskie came from a lake in Virginia made the experience even more unique.

The place is called Burke Lake. Owned by the Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, Burke is famous for nice catches of outsized channel catfish; but in 1969 a few bass fishermen were surprised when their artificials were savagely attacked by fish that could not be mistaken for bass. These were the first recorded catches of muskies planted in the lake.

In 1968, 600 muskie fingerlings were introduced into Burke, which lies in Fairfax County about 10 miles from Woodbridge. In 1971, 200 more were released and in 1972, 436 more fingerlings were introduced. Prior to 1968, some small numbers of muskie adults were planted, but records are unclear just how many and what size they were. Sam Nichols, manager of Burke Lake Park, thinks that some of these fish may now be as large as 25 pounds. A 41-inch, 21 pounder has been taken there.

In 1969, four citation-winning muskies were caught at Burke. To win a Virginia Game Commission citation, the muskie must be six pounds or better. In 1970, seventeen over-six pounders were caught. In 1971, 23

and 1972, 20 were taken. Up to April 30, 1973, 27 had been caught. This totals only 91 muskies over six pounds from a population of more than 1200 in a lake that measures only 216 acres! Even though some muskies under six pounds have also been caught in that time, one can readily understand that Burke Lake muskie fishing is a challenging proposition.

Since those first accidental fish were caught in 1969, Burke Lake regulars have developed a highly specialized technique for taking muskies. They borrowed some of their ideas from fellow muskie fishermen to the north, but basically their techniques follow old standard Southern bass fishing techniques.

When I moved into the Northern Virginia area, Burke Lake muskie fishing was well established and widely publicized on a local basis. At first, I couldn't believe it, but when I became convinced that the stories were true, I decided my fishing experience wouldn't be complete until I caught a Virginia muskie. I had heard that it takes an average fisherman about 100 hours of fishing to do this. The challenge fascinated me.

One man seemed to be the most consistent Burke Lake muskie fisherman: Set Mardirosian. As luck would have it, I met him on my very first trip to the lake. Set was standing on the edge of the lake wondering how to get his small pram from the parking lot down to the water. The place where he usually launched his boat was ice-bound from the early-March freeze; the only open water was 200 yards from the nearest parking spot. I offered to help him; he offered to let me fish with him.

Set explained that most muskies are caught by trolling in deep water over weed beds and brush. He said summer was the worst time to fish because the lake was too

crowded to allow good trolling.

The muskies are in water that ranges from 15 to 30 feet deep. In order to get large plugs down this deep, the fisherman must troll very fast. Some have tried using sinking plugs to reach the bottom, but they found the muskies wanted the lure to be traveling at a high rate of speed. Since only electric motors are allowed on Burke, this demanded some specialized rigs.

These fishermen found they could troll fast enough if they kept the weight of their boats down or used a 24-volt electric on heavier boats. I have even seen large bass boats trolling on Burke with two 24-volt motors. Set uses a small home-made fiber-glass pram that only weighs about 70 pounds. His 12-volt motor pushes him around at a good clip. He thinks this gives him an advantage over fellows who use heavier, slower rigs.

Tackle for these big fish is much the same as that used in deep trolling for bass, except for the addition of a nylon-coated wire leader to guard against the chance of a muskie's teeth biting through the line. Many bass plugs popular in the South for casting and trolling, such as Arbogasters, Mudbugs, Waterdogs, Bombers, and Hellbenders, are good bets. There are only two considerations when choosing plugs—color and size. Set swears by light plugs on bright days and dark plugs on cloudy days. Since this follows standard procedure for bass fishing, most fishermen will feel comfortable with it. The only size requirement is that the plug must be big—not just big, but BIG. These fish have huge mouths that are only surpassed by their huge appetites. They may feed only once a week, but when they do, it's usually on something big enough to fillet.

Set has a few pet spots on the lake where he concentrates his trolling, but actually muskies have been caught almost everywhere. He lets his line out until the plug bounces on the bottom, then he reels in just enough line to hold the plug about a foot off the bottom.

He frequently snags on the large masses of brush and trees on the lake bottom, but this is where the muskies live, so this is where you have to fish for them.

Most Burke Lake muskie fishermen use a small gaff to land their fish instead of a net. They play the fish until they can hold its head above the surface, then slip the gaff into its jaw. Big fish tear a net easily.

Some fishermen use line as light as 10 pound test. They don't catch many big fish, though, and they lose a lot of plugs. These muskies are down in the brush, and it takes at least 17 pound test to turn their heads and horse them away from the bottom. There is also the added advantage of being able to pull a snagged plug free. This line is usually spooled on a free-spool, bait casting reel. A stiff rod such as the popular worm rods is needed to handle the pressure of these big fish.

Does this gear sound familiar? It should if you fish for bass. It's the typical worming outfit. My wife was happy to learn this, because it meant I wouldn't have to go out and invest in a muskie rig.

One final word on tackle. Use the best and strongest you can afford. These fish are just about the most powerful fish you can catch in fresh water. They will tear up cheap or weak tackle and make junk out of it.

Armed with all this knowledge, I fished Burke two days without a hit. I have a little one-man plywood pram that zips around ahead of my 12-volt motor like Supermouse. I had purchased about twice as many deep-running plugs as I needed and found that I used a black, jointed Creek Chub Pikie with a ½-ounce, clamp-on sinker 18 inches up the line most of the time. The sinker helped keep this relatively shallow-running plug down where the muskies live.

On the morning of my third try, after only about 20 hours of muskie fishing, it happened. I was just making a turn when my plug hung up exactly as it had a hundred times before. I had been setting the hook every time I felt anything unusual, but this time I knew it wasn't brush. The fish moved slowly directly away from the boat as I quickly flipped the motor off. I must have set the hook a dozen times as hard as I could and then settled down to savor the fight.

I thought it was a small one because it allowed me to turn its head pretty easily. When I had worked it about half-way in, it decided to quit fooling around. It began moving with increasing speed away from me, and all I could do was hang on. The star drag on my reel made funny little zipping sounds, and every time he shook his head, the vibrations lifted me out of my seat.

The fish never jumped, but I'm glad it didn't. It was all I could do to hang on as it was. After about 10 minutes of give and take, I noticed I was taking more than I was giving. Then I saw him. Then he saw me. I liked what I saw. He didn't. The resulting dive would have made a whale envious. I thought it was all over, but my 17 pound test Stren held, and I worked him back to the top. I couldn't believe his size. He tried a couple more times to dive for the bottom, but his strength was gone. When I saw him rolling in the line, I knew it was just about over. I horsed him close and slipped my little gaff into his jaw. It would have been easier to have gotten out of the boat, treaded water and heaved him over the side than it was to lift him in.

When I finally got him into the boat, the group of other fishermen that had gathered around to watch congratulated me on my first muskie. It took me five minutes to stop shaking. I lit my pipe and headed for shore to weigh him in. Sam weighed him in on the official scales at an even 15 pounds, which qualified him as a citation fish. He was 37 inches long.

Muskie fishing is one of the fastest-growing sports in Virginia. There are three places in Virginia where muskies are well-established—Smith Mountain Lake, the James River and Burke. Don't pass up this thrilling fishing opportunity. And don't forget, it might not take 100 hours of fishing to land a lunker, but it will take a lot of patience and hard work.



Edited by ANN PILCHER



Governor Mills Godwin congratulates 23rd annual KEEP VIRGINIA GREEN Poster Contest winners. From left: Priscilla Glover (\$50 cash prize), David Brown (\$100), Alice Miranda (\$150)—all of Virginia Beach Vo-Tech Center—and Debbie Har-

Arlington's Joe Repasch, son Michael, and a stringer of six smallmouth bass and one channel catfish taken last October from the South Fork of the Shenandoah River near Bentonville Landing. Catfish weighed over four pounds; largest bass, approximately 2½ lbs. Duncan Richardson was also along. The trio took 37 fish that day, most being under the 12-inch keeper limit. Bait was minnows, as well as crayfish and salamanders caught by the Repasches themselves, who try to fish at least twice a month during April, May, September, October, and November. Last fall was one of their best seasons: the Repasch sportsmen landed at least three nice-sized fish on each Shenandoah expedition.

mon of Lynchburg's E. C. Glass High School in Lynchburg (\$400); 135 other high school and 592 elementary students won individual awards. At right, Miss Harmon stands with her poster which will be reproduced in full color on more than 300,000 KVG Forest Fire Prevention book covers for distribution to students throughout the state this fall. Virginia Forests, Inc., in cooperation with the Va. Div. of Forestry, sponsors the annual contest, offering \$3,200 in prizes. Theme this year: "Tree Farms—For Timber and Game." The contest, which ran from Oct. 1-Nov. 30, attracted entrants from 364 Virginia schools. Two school and two teacher awards (each consisting of \$100 and engraved trophy) were based on participation.



9-year-old Jennifer Nuckols of Lexington pulled this 12½ lb. catfish from the Maury River last July. Bait: a catawba worm. Four-year-old brother Jeffrey shares the joy of the catch.

KVG photos by Forrest W. Patton, Warsaw

Debbie and her top award creation.





Commission photo by Kesteloo

How To Hunt . . .

OLD BROWNS

By WILLIAM W. SADLER
Ashland

LANDOWNERS called us in to help solve the problem: Groundhogs had become a nuisance and had even begun to threaten the safety of saddle horses. Holes chucks had dug about the fields had caused at least two valuable horses to break their legs, not to mention the havoc they played with loaded hay wagons.

My hunting partner and I arrived to make camp on Friday evening, clean our rifles, and check our ammo compulsively. On Saturday at dawn we packed all our

JULY, 1975

gear into the Jeep and set out for the foothills. I remember the heavy dew soaking my boots and how comfortable the quilted vest felt over my flannel shirt. The air was alive with the breath of summer, and the trees had formed their customary canopy against the sky.

A gust of wind parted the veil of birch leaves and the shaggy shoulder of a heavy groundhog appeared in the field of my scope. I pulled the trigger and the brown hulk went down. As we approached it, that ole bruiser peeped out of one eye, caught us off guard, got his steam up, and hauled it to his hole. We stood there gawking as that nearly 8 year old, 13 pound, "stone dead" groundhog made a beeline for his underground cavern grinning to himself at the success of his "possum act." We had just fallen for the same kind of trick an Indian guide had told me the grizzly bear often used, and this old hog must have borrowed it just for this occasion. At the blast of the rifle, especially on a long shot when the lead strikes the ground anywhere near the hog, he will slump down or even flip over sideways then lay "dead still" and wait for your movement to locate you. Most old hogs search you out, then head for their hole when you least expect it.

Techniques used for getting older experienced chucks are somewhat different from those employed for younger hogs. Neighborhood boys had used 22's on those that could be taken under 50 yards and caught out in the open. They had trapped some as a last resort at saving the field. These old hogs that remained had to be hunted "grizzly style." We had to determine their range, study their habits, work out their feeding routine, and literally become a part of their habitat. My buddy and I had hunted hogs for years for farmers whose crops were being damaged and had kept accurate records on each kill: yardage, weather conditions, time of day, field location, weight of each hog. Tails were removed for an accurate count of the number bagged each season.

It is generally accepted among soybean growers that an average size groundhog will destroy \$50 to \$75 worth of beans in a single season. Groundhogs start trimming young bean shoots about the first of June and dig down for them when they're sprouted but not through the soil. Usually hogs eat out from the edge of a field in a semicircle and will dig a hole in the center of the field when beans get high enough to provide cover or when they have to cross an excessive amount of already trimmed territory to feed.

Very seldom do older tons operate this loosely. They eat out in a longer swath along the edge rather than be caught in the open, then dig a new hole on another side of the field under good cover as much as 100 yards back from the edge. When the semicircles start meeting from four sides of a 5 acre bean field, you can see why a farmer resorts to smoke bombs, traps, or water to eliminate these varmints. I chased a 10 pounder into a bank beside a clover patch and poured water in the

ground which filled his hole. Couldn't find him, so I dug through mud, clay, and rock to see him sitting high and dry on a catacomb ledge 6 inches above the filled tunnel, teeth bared, very much alive.

You've heard fox hunters talk about a sow fox who slipped in a hole and dug a bypass or blocked dirt behind her while hunters dug at the other end. Hogs pull similar tactics and have been discovered by new dirt piled in their original tunnel.

While riding through bean and clover fields about 6:00 p.m. on a summer evening one will often "catch" one of these old boys eating in a bean row. He'll haul tail to cover, but stop dead still just inside honeysuckle edge to look you in the eye. Let your vehicle slack its pace and he'll be gone. Now, when you get over the hill, shut the motor off, ease the door open, and begin your stalk back behind a fence row or a ditch bank. Hide so that you can see the area he vanished in; when the dust from your wheels settles, he'll be back, not necessarily down the same path he went in. It might cost you 30 minutes; but if you fooled him, you'd better have that scope right for there won't be a second shot at an already jumpy old man.

Old varmints like to migrate from field to field as beans pop out. A few years ago my hound dog caught a yearling pig by the nape of the neck and roughed him up a bit. I felt sorry for him, nursed him back to health, put a brass pig ringer in his ear, and turned him loose. A farmer found him 4 years later, 13 miles down the road in his butterbeans.

I hunted for 16 years before I saw and heard concrete evidence that "whistle pigs" really do whistle! They not only whistle, but some make a chattering noise after the whistle when a dog or person threatens their territory. I've found that younger chucks are the ones mostly involved in whistling.

Hogs establish a form of social rank or peck order. Older toms and heavier sows seem to head the hierarchy with little position differentiation beneath them. (If you want to hear a bear fight in miniature, let one big hog get chased into another old tom's hole. The growling and clacking of teeth will raise the hair on your neck.)

You've probably heard a seasoned grizzly hunter talk about an old silver tip that rumbled through the woods growling and smacking at bushes and limbs just because he was mad at the general situation. I was hidden by a field in the honeysuckle watching for a hog that had given me the slip for nearly two years. I heard a low pitched growl that sounded like a tomcat with his head stuck in an empty salmon can. Lumbering down the path from behind me was a large but scroungy looking old hog, squealing as he came. His rodent incisors had grown into the floor of his bottom jaw causing him great discomfort. Apparently he had been slack on his gnawing or sick and had let those chompers get too long.

Choice of a rifle and placing of the shot are foremost. A 22 mag. does a great job plinking those average hogs even up to 125 yards. The 22-250 is probably the most popular "hog gun" on sale today, shots recorded out to 400 yards with the sportster and far beyond that with a bull barrel. A 55 grain hollow point put through a light to carry 22-250 with a good scope and sling have worked best for us. Two shotbags full of sand tied together with twine make a good rest across a hood or on a fence rail. Some folks like a tripod and stool but you've got to learn to shoot free handed, from any position, at any time, and take a trophy when he appears.

A shiny nose, well oiled barrel, and high gloss stock are guarantees of "not seeing big chucks." Put a camouflage bow sock over your barrel and a turkey hunting veil over your face and you can sit in his back door. My pa told me that a grizzly could smell a bacon rind for 15 miles and could hear you take your safety off for 10. A groundhog doesn't benefit from his smell or hearing at any great distance, but he can see almost any movement across the widest of fields.

When time is limited and hogs have become extremely destructive, trapping might be your only resort for saving a crop. Conibear beaver traps were outlawed for use above water due to the extreme danger they held for dogs and wildlife, but they were a guarantee for catching hogs. Placed flat over the hole with the trigger fork set in the center, it was hard to get past. When setting steel traps for chucks, carry a soil auger with your traps and chain stobs. Drill a hole down through the top of the tunnel as far back as you can reach and large enough for the stob ring and chain to be pulled through from the inside. The hole should be off-center so that the chain can be curved and camouflaged with dirt up the tunnel wall. Stob the chain in solid ground above the tunnel. Usual activity allowed by slack chain is eliminated by the confines of the hole. (The local game warden should be consulted for legality of trapping in your area.)

Another trick that took older hogs was use of "bait pigs." We let some younger hogs frolic and browse about; then an old sow eased out from the corner and sat motionless for 15 minutes. Here's where a good back-up rifle comes in handy, for you can often get off several shots from a well-concealed position. Instead of "bait pigs," one boy sewed brown cloth on clorox bottles and tied them to stobs to blow in the wind. An old boy from "Kentuck" had two brown rabbits he staked out for lures and, believe it or not, the hogs felt right comfortable around them. Although Virginia's "Old Browns" are only 1/80 the size of an Alaskan Silver-tip, they will match his cunning pound for pound. To take those browns requires savvy. You have to study their habitat, anticipate their movements from observation, and keep your shooting eye keen with a gun you understand. Stay prepared for him and remember: he didn't get trophy size by accident.



Edited by JIM KERRICK

Outboard Motorboats with Steering Systems

The owners and operators of outboard motorboats equipped with stick steering systems are urged to be alert to the dangers that go with the use of these systems—especially when stick steering is combined with a large horsepower motor.

Accident reports and accident data analyses both show that a significant number of injuries and deaths occur either because stick steering systems components fail in use or because very little stick movement is needed to throw a boat into a high speed turn. In one particularly gruesome incident, a man was thrown out of a boat when it abruptly went into a high-speed turn. The boat continued to turn in a tight circle, passing over him as he floundered in the water. When his body was recovered, rescuers found that the razor keen propeller blades had nearly cut him in two.

What can the owner or operator of a boat with stick steering do to protect himself and his passengers from harm? Coast Guard engineers have found that practical answers to the problem of safely using stick steering systems fall into three areas. These are proper installation, proper maintenance, and proper use.

INSTALLATION:

1. Follow installation instructions exactly. If your dealer installs stick steering for you, get a copy of the instructions and check to see if they are followed.

2. Bolt the steering lever itself to a strong vertical surface at the side of the boat.

MAINTENANCE:

1. Follow manufacturer instructions on lubrication and service exactly. Special tools needed? Then get them or take the boat to the dealer for periodic service.

USE:

1. Use stick steering with outboards up to 33 horsepower; never more than this. (The Bass Anglers Sportsman Society [B.A.S.S.] forbids the tournament use of stick steering with motors that exceed 33 horsepower. The U. S. Coast Guard applauds their action.)

2. Inspect every bolt, nut, fastening, screw, locknut, or lever of the entire steering system before each use. Lubricate all moving parts periodically and remove any accumulated rust.

3. Be sure the motor is tightly screwed to the transom.

4. Move at moderate speed from one fishing spot to the next.

5. Steer very gently indeed. A little motion on the stick does a lot back at the motor. Even a small outboard can capsize the boat under the right (wrong?) conditions.

6. Leaning or pushing against the steering stick from the side is almost certain to get you into trouble. They're not designed for side loads and will not stand up to them.

Boat Camping

Canoes and other car-toppers are great for boat camping where you can row across the lake or river to a deserted location. A boat with a cuddy cabin is convenient. Or you can buy a boat which can be converted into a camper at night. These come equipped with a canvas top and side curtains which cover the entire boat—all supported by a metal frame. Lounge seats inside are then used as bunks. You can also get a large enough boat with a built-in head, stove and ice box.

Take a compass and chart when exploring by boat. Depth of inland waters, lakes and rivers may be lower in summer than in spring or late fall. Approach an unfamiliar bank slowly; measure water depth with a paddle or boathook to avoid getting stuck.

On a tidal estuary or in salt water, look for highwater marks on the bank and anchor accordingly, or you might find yourself high and dry the next day—with water some yards away.

More families are discovering the exciting world of boating and camping.



Photo courtesy Mercury Motors

BIRD NESTS



FLICKER.

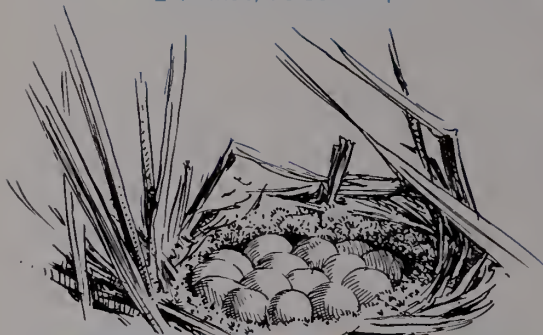
Cavity drilled in trees, poles, posts, old buildings 2-100 ft. above ground. Opening: 2-4" wide; 10-36" deep.



RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD. Cup-shaped; of bud scales and plant down; fastened with spiders' silk to branches 6-50 ft. above ground; covered with lichens. Outside: 1½" wide; 1¼" high. Woodlands; orchards.



HOUSE WREN. Bulky; coarse sticks, grass, feathers, wool, leaves, weed stalks, rootlets, bark; generally fills nesting site in tree, stump, birdhouse, tin can, watering pot, etc. Outside: 4½" wide; 2" high.

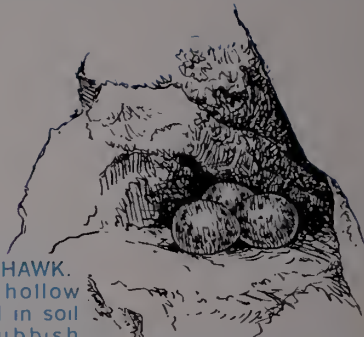


MALLARD. Reeds, flags, grasses, leaves; lined with female's dark gray or sepia with white breast down. Feathers and rubbish found in nest. Near water or in fields.



KINGFISHER.

Enlarged chamber at end of burrow excavated in sandy, clay, or gravelly bank, preferably near water. Circular or dome-shaped; 10-12" wide; 6-7" high. Lined with fish bones or scales, crustacean fragments, leaves, sticks.



DUCK HAWK.

Slight hollow scraped in soil and rubbish on rocky cliff ledge. Lined with grass; su rock flakes, twigs, bird bo. Inside 12" wide; 1½" deep. regions: river valle.

ROBIN. Cup-shaped, thick-walled; of coarse grass, twigs, rootlets, paper, cloth, string; inner wall of mud; usually lined with fine grass. Outside: 6½" wide; 3" high. On branch, crotch, post 5-30 ft. up.



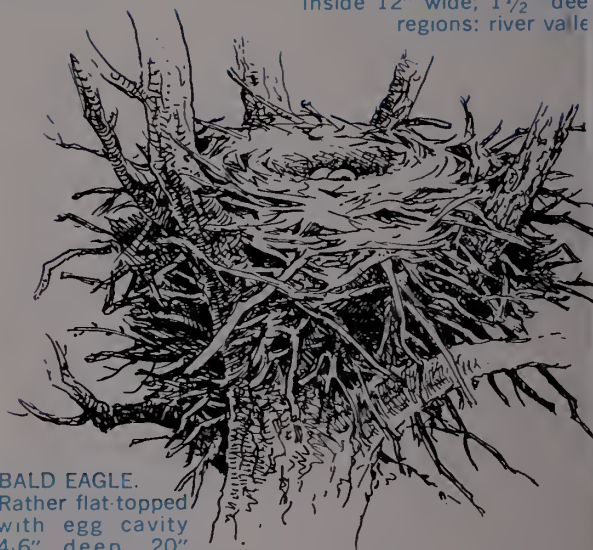
BALTIMORE ORIOLE.

Gourd-shaped, gray colored; of plant fibers, string, yarn, grasses, hair, bark. Outside: 5" high or more. Entrance oval 3¼" x 2"; cup 4½" deep, 2½" wide. Suspended on branch.



BALD EAGLE.

Rather flat-topped with egg cavity 4-6" deep, 20" wide; of sticks, sedges, grasses, rubbish; lined with grass or pine needles. 5-8 ft. across; 8 ft. high. Usually in or near top of high trees near oceans, rivers, lakes.



WILD TURKEY: A hollow in ground lined with a few leaves; well concealed in or beneath dense underbrush or shrubbery. Woodlands.



CHIMNEY SWIFT. Semicircular basket or hammock of twigs, glued together and to chimney (about 10 ft. from top), similar structure, or vacant building, with saliva.



CLIFF SWALLOW. Gourd or bottle shaped. Mud strengthened with straw, horsehair, scantily lined with dried grass stems and feathers. Beneath eaves of buildings.



MOUNTAIN TERN. Depression in beach sand or lined with bits of shell or small stones; wall built hollow mound of grasses, seaweed or fish bones.

NED SMITH